

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OPIC-03 AID-05 IGA-02

XMB-02 SIL-01 LAB-04 /104 W

-----081416Z 072240 /43

P 081055Z MAR 77

FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5724

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JOHANNESBURG 0532

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB PINT PFOR SF

SUBJECT: FRG SUPPORT FOR BLACK TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

1. SUMMARY: THROUGH THE CHURCH GROUP MISEREROR, FRG IS ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL EXTERNAL SUPPORTERS OF BLACK TRADE UNIONISM IN SOUTH AFRICA. INTERVENTION BY THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR ON BEHALF OF SEVERAL BANNED TRADE UNION ADVISORS SUGGEST THAT THE SAG REGRETS HAVING ISSUED THE BANNING ORDER AT THE INSTIGATION OF TUCSA GENERAL SECRETARY GROBBELAAR AND IS SEARCHING FOR A GRATEFUL WAY TO MITIGATE THE HARM DONE. END SUMMARY.

2. WEST GERMANY IS ONE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S PRINCIPAL TRADING PARTNERS. EXPORTS FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO GERMANY DURING THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1976 STOOD AT 362 MILLION RAND (ONE RAND EQUALS APPROXIMATELY 1.15 US DOLLARS)
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IMPORTS FROM GERMANY STOOD AT 829 MILLION RANDS OR 18.2 PERCENT OF ALL SOUTH AFRICAN IMPORTS. TOTAL GERMAN INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA IS ESTIMATED AT 1.5 BILLION RAND.

3. DURING A DISCUSSION OF FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY POLICIES WITH REGARD TO LABOR PRACTICES IN SOUTH AFRICA, DR ALEXANDER PETRI, SECOND SECRETARY OF THE GERMAN EMBASSY,

ADVISED REGIONAL LABOR OFFICER THAT HIS GOVERNMENT IS ONE OF THE PRIMARY SUPPORTERS OF THE BLACK TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA. THROUGH THE GERMAN CHURCH GROUP MISEREROR, FRG HAS PROVIDED A SUBSIDY OF 500,000 RANDS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEARS 1976-78 TO THE URBAN TRAINING PROJECT (UTP), WHICH SPONSORS TEN OF THE 28 BLACK TRADE UNIONS. OTHER SUPPORT FOR THE UTP COMES FROM THE SWISS AND DUTCH TRADE UNION MOVEMENTS, THE BRITISH TUC, AND THE INTERNATIONAL METAL WORKERS FEDERATION.

4. IN VIEW OF ITS ACTIVE SUPPORT FOR THE UTP, FRG WAS CONCERNED OVER THE BANNING LAST NOVEMBER OF THREE OF UTP'S ADVISORS, LOET DOUWES-DEKKER AND ERIC AND JEAN TYACKE. (MRS TYACKE IS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN). THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR ASKED TO SEE MINISTER OF JUSTICE KRUGER AT THAT TIME TO DETERMINE THE REASONS FOR THE BANNINGS AND TO SEEK RELIEF FOR THE UTP LEADERS.

5. ACCORDING TO PETRI, THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR MET AGAIN WITH KRUGER AT THE END OF FEBRUARY. HE IS NOT ABLE TO REVEAL EVERYTHING WHICH WAS SAID IN THESE SENSITIVE DISCUSSIONS "LEST A DOOR BE CLOSED." PETRI DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT KRUGER IS "TRYING TO MAKE A DEAL" WITH DOUWES-DEKKER TO ALLOW HIM TO RESUME TEACHING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND IF HE DISENGAGES FROM ACTIVITIES INVOLVING BLACK TRADE UNIONS. ACCORDING TO PETRI, KRUGER WOULD ALSO LIKE DOUWES-DEKKER TO ACCEPT A POSITION WITH THE SAG, POSSIBLY WITH THE BOKSBURG VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROJECT.
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6. PETRI HAS URGED DOUWES-DEKKER TO CONSIDER KRUGER'S PROPOSALS CAREFULLY WHEN THE TWO MEET. ANY RELIEF FOR THE TYACKES FROM THEIR BANNING ORDERS WOULD, ACCORDING TO PETRI, BE DEPENDENT ON HOW DISCUSSIONS PROCEED BETWEEN KRUGER AND DOUWES-DEKKER.

7. COMMENT: KRUGER AND THE SAG FIND THEMSELVES ONCE AGAIN IN THE EMBARRASSING POSITION OF HAVING PROVOKED BY THE BANNING ORDERS PRECISELY WHAT THEY DESIRED TO AVOID, VIZ, THE EVOLUTION OF A MORE MILITANT AND INDEPENDENT BLACK TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, WHICH MIGHT BEG TO ORGANIZE ON A NATIONAL SCALE. THE CONSENSUS OF MOST INFORMED OBSERVERS, INCLUDING BRITISH LABOR ATTACHE VOSE, IS THAT KRUGER WAS PROMPTED TO ISSUE THE BANNING ORDERS BY TUCSA GENERAL SECRETARY GROBBELAAR AFTER THE TUCSA ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN SEPTEMBER 1976 IN EAST LONDON WHICH REVEALED SERIOUS STRAINS IN THE LATTER ORGANIZATION OVER THE ISSUE OF BLACK TRADE UNIONISM. HAVING TAKEN THE

UNFORTUNATE STEP F ISSUING THE BANNING ORDERS, KRUGER
IS NOW SEARCHING FOR A GRACEFUL WAY TO BACK DOWN.
AT OTHER LEVELS, E.G. THE MINISTRY OF LABOR, THE SAG
IS ALSO SEARCHING FOR SOME WAY TO ASSUME TUTELAGE OF THE
BLACK TRADE UNION MOVEMENT WITHOUT APPEARING TO DESTROY IT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: UNION GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS, MINORITIES, FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 08-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977JOHANN00532
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770079-0561
Format: TEL
From: JOHANNESBURG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770383/aaaacvcg.tel
Line Count: 122
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3137febb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3179854
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRG SUPPORT FOR BLACK TRADE UNION MOVEMENT
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PFOR, SF, GE, MISEREROR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3137febb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009